



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

stantly in contact with those with whom you have fought side by side many political battles, but with whom you are no longer in sympathy; to feel, in a word, all the currents of public opinion which have thus far helped you on in your career now setting against you,—such things as these it requires unusual courage to meet. Such a trial Mr. Webster passed through after his 7th of March speech; and such a test was successfully endured by Mr. Grimes, though not without a great strain on his powers of endurance, as was evinced by the stroke of paralysis by which he was prostrated two days after he delivered his opinion that the President had not been guilty of an impeachable offence. Eighteen months afterwards he writes from Glion, Switzerland:—

“Sitting here calmly, and reviewing my whole course, I have no hesitation in saying that I regard that act for which I have been most condemned, my vote on the impeachment trial, as the most worthy, the proudest act of my life. I shall ever thank God that in that hour of terrible trial, when many privately confessed that they sacrificed their judgments and their consciences at the behests of party newspapers and party hate, I had the courage to be true to my oath and my conscience, and refused, when I had sworn to ‘do a man impartial justice according to the Constitution and the laws,’ to do execution upon him according to the dictation of the chairman of the Republican Congressional Committee, or the howlings of a partisan mob. I would not to-day exchange the recollection of that grasp of the hand and that glorified smile given me by that purest and ablest of men I ever knew, Mr. Fessenden, when I was borne into the Senate Chamber on the arms of four men to cast my vote, for the highest distinction of life. Yet we had no desire to save Johnson as Johnson; I wanted to save my own self-respect and my oath, and I wanted to save the country from the wild, revolutionary career upon which the party was entering.”

After his return from Europe Mr. Grimes lived quietly at Burlington until his sudden death, from heart disease, February 7, 1872.

---

9. — *Chips from a German Workshop.* Volume IV. *Essays chiefly on the Science of Language.* By F. MAX MÜLLER, M. A. New York: Scribner, Armstrong, & Co. 1876.

THE fourth volume of “Chips from a German Workshop” will be found inferior in interest to none of its predecessors, and, owing to the diversity of the subjects discussed, will perhaps attract even more general attention than any of them. Although most of the articles have been printed before, they are now for the first time brought to—

gether in an accessible form, after having undergone such revision as the author may have been led to make, either in consequence of the criticisms of others, or of further investigations of his own. In addition there is a good deal of supplementary matter in the shape of notes and of replies to objections that have been brought against the views contained in certain of the lectures as originally delivered.

Necessarily, many of the topics treated are not of a nature to be discussed by any except professional linguistic students; yet the work as a whole contains much that will make it of value to every man of letters. It is marked by the merits which even to the most superficial observer are conspicuous in all Müller's productions. Clearness in the expression of ideas, even when the ideas themselves are not very clear; fertility and attractiveness of illustration; a certain felicity of style which gives interest to even the driest subject;—these are as fully apparent in this last volume as in any one of the preceding. Along with them are displayed the defects which have come more and more to characterize Müller's later writings, inaccurate statement of fact, hasty generalization, a disposition springing perhaps from an inherited poetic temperament, to build up showy and startling theories, which, however plausible at first sight, are usually found to have no basis of accurate and far-reaching investigation upon which to rest. In one of his earlier volumes he introduced with approval a quotation from Sir David Brewster, "that as an instrument of research the influence of the imagination has been too much overlooked by those who have ventured to give laws to philosophy"; and in speaking of the title of Indo-Germanic, which Frederick Schlegel applied to the languages of the family to which we belong, he himself observed that "when a new science is to be created, the imagination of the poet is wanted even more than the accuracy of the scholar." With certain limitations this is unquestionably true doctrine; at the same time it is dangerous doctrine; nor can we think that its utterer has entirely escaped from the perils which attend it. In the business of manufacturing new sciences, which Müller has largely entered into of late years, the disproportion between what is built upon poetic imagination and what upon accurate scholarship, has been gradually growing greater and greater; and he shows at times a disposition to forget that a new science, in order to stand, must have some foundation of fact, no matter how gorgeous may be the superstructure which the imagination erects. There has been, and is, in consequence, a steadily growing distrust of many of the theories which he puts forth; and of this he himself is evidently conscious from the apologetic tone in which he frequently defends them, and sometimes, it must be said,

explains them so thoroughly as practically to explain them away entirely. But whatever may be thought of the correctness of his views, no one can question his power of making them attractive. Granting, even as a German critic has lately said, that they are now usually quoted only in order to be contradicted (*er fast nur mehr zitiert zu werden pflegt um widerlegt werden zu können*), the fact still remains that a literary skill, very rare in his native country, and not often equalled in his adopted one, has enabled him to put the claims of linguistic science in the most effective light before the whole educated public, and to make the science itself an object of interest to every intelligent man.

Nowhere, indeed, do Müller's characteristic excellences appear to better advantage than in the opening article of the volume, which is the lecture delivered by him in 1868 before the University of Oxford on the value of Comparative Philology as a branch of academic study. The statement of the benefits to be derived from it is not only clear and convincing in itself, but is enforced by suggestive illustrations; and the address is moreover remarkable for its vigorous protest against the degradation of the fellowships of the English universities into mere sinecures, which most of them have now come to be. The warning contained in it is not unworthy of attention in this country, especially at this time when men are founding fellowships with very vague ideas of what they are doing it for, and other men are receiving them with no apparent consciousness of any definite duty imposed upon them by that fact beyond the drawing of the income. Somewhat less popular in its character, but even more attractive to linguistic students, is the second article in the volume, which is the Rede lecture on the Stratification of Language, delivered in the same year as the preceding, before the University of Cambridge. It is followed in this work by a second part, in which he replies briefly to a criticism of Professor Pott, and combats very fully, and as it seems to us very strongly, the theory of Curtius, that there are seven periods in the development of the Aryan languages. These Müller reduces to three. We notice, in passing, that in discussing the termination *ard*, he still retains in the text the statement made in the lecture as first delivered, that, "in English, *sweetard*, originally very sweet person, has been changed or resuscitated as *sweetheart*, by the same process which changed *shamefast* into *shamefaced*." The assertion strikes us as incapable of being maintained, though its incorrectness, it must be added, interferes in no way with the strength of the argument it is designed to illustrate, and we only speak of it because Müller's authority has given it wide popular currency. He himself, indeed, in a note, now

declares that he feels some doubt in regard to it, more especially as Mr. Skeat has written him that the form used in Middle English is not *sweetard*, but *sweeting*, and refers him to the romance of "William of Palerne," written about the middle of the fourteenth century, in which the latter word appears four times. That poem, it may be said, furnishes pretty positive proof of the incorrectness of the derivation above given. *Sweeting* not only occurs in two other instances besides those mentioned by Mr. Skeat (lines 3095, 3104), but, what is far more conclusive, the form *swete hert(e)* is found several times, as in lines 1550, 1869, 2224, and 2559; and along with it, as if to make assurance doubly sure, corresponding forms, such as *dere herte* (lines 1538, 2342) and *derworth herte* (line 2585).

The article in the volume which attracted the most attention at the time of its appearance was the lecture on Missions, delivered in December, 1873, in Westminster Abbey. Along with it is printed here the sermon preached the forenoon of the same day by Dean Stanley, in which his reasons are given for inviting a layman to speak on that subject at that time and in that place. We know of no better epithet by which to describe this lecture than to call it queer; which perhaps it might properly enough be, as all the circumstances connected with it were of that nature. In using this adjective we are not thinking of the division which Müller makes of the six religions of the Aryan and Semitic world into Missionary and Non-missionary; but of the curious blending of science and sanctimony that runs through the whole address. In a postscript to this article, entitled "On the Vitality of Brahminism," he defends his classification and his remarks upon that particular religion against the attack made upon them by Mr. Lyall in the "Fortnightly Review" for July, 1874. Without entering into a consideration of the merits of the question, the division proposed by Müller seems to be of the kind of those made in such haste that it takes all of one's leisure to support or explain them. It is certainly dangerous to argue from the present condition of a religion as to its missionary character in the past; it is almost impossible to believe that a religion like Brahminism, confessedly including at the least one hundred and ten millions of souls, should not at some time in its history have been animated by the spirit of proselytism, using that word in its ordinary and not in its purely etymological sense. But it is not so much the matter of the lecture that will surprise most readers as the manner. How any one could have objected to it on religious grounds is a wonder. The tone throughout is of the conventional orthodox pattern, and the reflections are generally so far from startling that they would nowhere find them-

selves in more congenial companionship than among the "Graver Thoughts of a Country Parson."

Besides these we have noticed there are three other lectures included in this volume, one on the Migration of Fables, interesting as far as it goes; one on the Results of the Science of Language, delivered at the University of Strasburg; and the address before the International Congress of Orientalists at London in 1874. The general articles conclude with a Life of Colebrooke, which originally appeared in the "Edinburgh Review." This is a just and even glowing tribute to a man little known outside of special circles, but whose eminent services and great abilities fairly entitle him to the distinction of being what Müller calls him, "the founder and father of true Sanscrit scholarship in Europe." It would have been well if with this article the volume had closed.

We come now to what is certainly the most disagreeable part of our task, an examination of the two last articles, entitled respectively "My Answer to Mr. Darwin," and "In Self-Defence." The former appeared first in the "Contemporary Review" for January, 1875 (with characteristic carelessness Müller says in the text, November, 1874); the latter is entirely original in more senses than one. They are in the nature of a violent personal attack upon a leading American scholar, and are in many ways the most peculiar productions that have ever come from the author's pen. Controversies of this kind, always painful, have this special difficulty about them, that from the character of the subjects involved they can never be examined upon their merits save by few; and there are always old women enough connected with literature who can be trusted in such cases to invariably clamor for peace, whether founded upon justice or not, because it is inconceivable to them that anybody can take an interest in matters which they themselves are unable to comprehend. On the contrary, holding the views we do, we are not in the least disposed to condemn Müller for defending himself if he felt aggrieved. Conceding the right, however, the method in which he does it, and the means by which he does it, must be subjected to the strictest scrutiny: and, after a careful investigation, we are reluctantly compelled to say that such a scrutiny is the very last thing that these two articles can bear; that, beyond anything that Müller has written, they are of a kind to grieve his friends and gladden his enemies. Many of the statements contained in them are such, indeed, as can only be excused on the ground of a carelessness culpable in any one, but in a scholar little less than criminal; we shrink from saying that they are due to deliberate design. This is a point

which we hope to make plain to the most careless reader. Although many of the charges have been ably and satisfactorily answered in other quarters, there is a special propriety in the discussion of the subject by us, because much of the adverse criticism of which Müller complains originally appeared in this periodical. Indeed, as he specifically mentions it, and insinuates that he expects to be reviewed in it, the least that we can in justice do is, to take care that he shall not be disappointed. For the convenience of readers, references will be given to both the American and English editions of this last volume.

The immediate occasion of this particular controversy was the publication in the "Contemporary Review" of November, 1874, by Mr. George Darwin, the son of the naturalist, of an abstract of an article by Professor Whitney, which had appeared in this Review in July of that same year, under the title of "Darwinism and Language." It was followed by articles in the same magazine both by Müller and Whitney, and these were republished, with some modifications, in Germany in the *Deutsche Rundschau*. Up to this time it appears, from his own statement, that, in a literary life of more than twenty-five years, Müller had never been personal. He believed, justly, that the cause of truth was never advanced by public controversy (p. 465 [482]); and to truth, we are assured by him, he has been and is so deeply devoted that whosoever serves in the noble army for the conquest of it, "whether private or general, will always find in him a faithful friend, and, if need be, a fearless defender" (p. 531 [549]). Actuated by such feelings as these, he never, for years, noticed "the intentional rudeness and annoyance" (p. 527 [544]) of the American professor; though our admiration for his long self-restraint is, in a measure, tempered by the information which he communicates in other places (pp. 421, 466 [437, 484]), that he has never read until lately the writings in which this rudeness and annoyance are found; and, indeed, is somewhat indignant still that he should be expected to read them before replying to them. But magnanimity cannot be kept up forever, even in the patient endurance of rude and arrogant criticism which one does not read. There is a duty owing to those whose good opinion is valued to repel unjust attacks, in this case owing to Mr. Darwin, Professor Haeckel, and others (p. 528 [546]); and in self-defence Müller retorts with language which he confesses "sounds very harsh" (p. 524 [542]), and which is certainly violent enough to compensate fully for an enforced self-restraint of even more than twenty-five years. That he has gone so far his partisans already deplore; and we think that

he himself, when he comes to consider the matter, will regret that his first essay in public controversy should have been couched in such a tone as to give the impression that it was inspired not so much by a desire to discharge a duty as to gratify a spite.

Into a consideration of the fundamental differences of opinion between the two scholars there is not the time, nor is this the place for us to enter; and we shall speak only of the direct charges which Müller has brought against Whitney of misrepresentation, of indulgence in personalities, and in particular of having been guilty, while pointing out the errors of others, of making gross blunders of his own. The charge of misrepresentation is ordinarily a difficult one to meet. An author certainly has the right to explain his own meaning, and can only be held, in a measure, responsible for the inaccurate impression which ignorance or carelessness may have caused his critic to receive. If the interpretation which he gives can be legitimately made out from his words, it is hardly a sufficient reply that the interpretation of his opponent can also be deduced from them. At the same time it is manifestly most unfair that he should appeal to later writings, in which the original statement is modified or entirely changed, as a defence against criticism made upon the original statement itself. Yet it is to this that Müller is obliged to resort to make good his charge of misrepresentation. One marked illustration of this, the use of the terms *surd* and *sonant*, we do not care to examine here, on account of its technical nature; but it will fully serve our purpose to cite one of a more popular character, which is incidentally referred to by Müller himself in this volume, and in those terms of satisfaction which a man uses who feels that he is clearly in the right. That we may not be accused of doing him an injustice, we shall quote the exact words, both of the original statement and of the explanations subsequently appended. The former, expressing his views on the origin of language, occurs in the ninth lecture of the first series of his "Lectures on the Science of Language," delivered originally in 1861. In this lecture he attacked in succession the theory that roots are imitations of sounds, and the theory that they are involuntary interjections. The one he called the Bow-wow theory, the other the Pooh-pooh theory. After examining and rejecting both, he went on to give his own explanation in the following words, which we reproduce verbatim:—

"And now I am afraid I have but a few minutes left to explain the last question of all in our science, namely, How can sound express thought? How did roots become the sign of general ideas? How was the abstract idea of measuring expressed by *mā*, the idea of thinking by *man*? How



did *gâ* come to mean going, *sthâ* standing, *sad* sitting, *dâ* giving, *mar* dying, *char* walking, *kar* doing?

"I shall try to answer as briefly as possible. The four hundred or five hundred roots which remain as the constituent elements in different families of languages are not interjections, nor are they imitations. They are *phonetic types*, produced by a power inherent in human nature. They exist, as Plato would say, by nature; though with Plato we should add that, when we say by nature, we mean by the hand of God. There is a law which runs through nearly the whole of nature, that everything which is struck rings. Each substance has its peculiar ring. We can tell the more or less perfect structure of metals by their vibrations, by the answer which they give. Gold rings differently from tin, wood rings differently from stone; and different sounds are produced according to the nature of each percussion. It was the same with man, the most highly organized of nature's works. Man, in his primitive and perfect state, was not only endowed, like the brute, with the power of expressing his sensations by interjections and his perceptions by onomatopoeia: he possessed, likewise, the faculty of giving more articulate expression to the rational conceptions of his mind. That faculty was not of his own making. It was an instinct; an instinct of the mind as irresistible as any other instinct. So far as language is the production of that instinct, it belongs to the realm of nature. Man loses his instincts as he ceases to want them. His senses become fainter, when, as in the case of scent, they become useless. Thus the creative faculty which gave to each conception as it thrilled for the first time through the brain a phonetic expression became extinct when its object was fulfilled."

To this extract was appended a foot-note, which reads as follows:—

"This view was propounded many years ago by Professor Heyse in the lectures which he gave at Berlin, and which have been very carefully published since his death by one of his pupils, Dr. Steinthal. The fact that wood, metal, cords, etc., if struck, vibrate and ring, can, of course, be used as an illustration only, and not as an explanation. The faculty, peculiar to man, in his primitive state, by which every impression from without received its vocal expression from within, must be accepted as an ultimate fact. That faculty must have existed in man, because its effects continue to exist. Analogies from the inanimate world, however, are useful, and deserve further examination."

This is the so-called *ding-dong* theory. It will be found stated in these very words on pages 384 and 385 of the first American edition of the first series of lectures on the science of language. This edition is a reprint of the second and revised English edition, and was published in 1862. It will astonish the readers of the above extract to find that this theory is one which Müller has never held and has never advocated; and that men like Professor Whitney, who have

attributed to him a belief in it, have misunderstood him, even if they have not been guilty of misrepresenting him. In the Preface to the sixth English edition, published in 1871, he denied the charge in the strongest terms. "Though I have protested before," he says, "I must protest once more against the supposition that the theory on the origin of language which I explained at the end of my first course, and which I distinctly described as that of Professor Heyse of Berlin, was ever held by myself." The previous protest appears to have been made in the fifth English edition, which appeared in 1866. A copy of this we have not seen, but the Preface to it is included in the sixth edition. In that he speaks of having expressed himself more definitely and clearly in one or two cases where his meaning had been misapprehended even by "unprejudiced critics," and he refers directly to this point. "Thus in my last lecture," he writes, "where I had to speak of the origin of roots, I had quoted the opinion of the late Professor Heyse of Berlin, but I never meant to convey the impression that I adopted that opinion." As to the impression which Müller means to convey when he makes a positive statement, we confess we are beginning to have some doubt; as to the impression which the extracts cited above necessarily must convey, there can be no question. It is certainly unfortunate that in order to sustain his interpretation of what he now says he meant, he has been obliged to insert additions and alterations, which do not have so much the effect of making the meaning clearer as of changing it altogether. Thus, for instance, the sentence beginning the second paragraph quoted read originally, "I shall try to answer as briefly as possible"; in the late editions it has been expanded into "I shall try to answer as briefly as possible by showing, at least, what roots are not, which may help us to form some conception of what roots really may be." The language of the second paragraph quoted is, indeed, modified throughout, though very clumsily, in the lecture as it now stands; and a third paragraph is added, which begins with the statement that though there may be value in speculations of this kind, he would not like to indorse them. It may be well to remark, moreover, that the language of the foot-note has been changed, and that Heyse, who in the first editions was not of importance enough to be put in the index, is in the present editions elevated to a place of dignity there, as the author of this particular view of the origin of speech.

Facts like these need no comment. They speak for themselves. There is but one possible interpretation of the passage we have quoted, the interpretation which Whitney and everybody else, including "unpreju-

diced critics," gave it ; unless, indeed, Müller has a monopoly of language, and can impose upon it any meaning he sees fit. It is no discredit to any man to change his opinions, especially on a subject like the origin of speech, about which, so far, the most ignorant of us knows full as much as the wisest, and neither of them can be said to know much. The real discredit is in the denial of having ever held opinions which one's own words, if they have any meaning at all, show clearly to have been once firmly held and earnestly advocated. We have gone into detail in this particular matter, we have furnished to the most doubtful every means of verifying or disproving our statements, partly because the subject is less technical than other points of difference involved in the controversy ; but, principally, because it is a suggestive illustration of the method by which Müller makes out his charge of misrepresentation. Numerous examples of a like character could be offered. Thus he tells us (p. 475 [493]) that in discussing the subject whether language is a physical or an historical science, he finds, and, indeed, is "glad to find," that he can repeat every word he used fifteen years ago without a single change or qualification ; and, to prove this, proceeds to quote a passage from the second lecture of his first series. The reader, however, will have an experience somewhat different from that of Müller. He will find, whether he is glad to find it or not, that the passage cited in this volume varies in one most important clause from the form in which it originally appeared. As quoted here, it ends with the declaration that "it is nevertheless through the instrumentality of man alone that language can be changed " ; but as it was written fifteen years ago, this clause reads, "it is very difficult to explain what causes the growth of language," and so it will be found in the early editions. That there is a change in the words employed, most persons can be trusted to see ; how important the change is, only those who have followed the discussion will see clearly. It is hard enough to contend with a loose thinker who frequently advances the most opposite views on the same subject, and who, in consequence, is enabled to defend himself against the critic, who has pointed out the errors contained in one passage, by referring to another passage in which an exactly contradictory view has been maintained. But the difficulty is increased tenfold, if he has the right to quote the changed expressions by which his earlier utterances have been modified or entirely altered in consequence of criticism, as a defence against the criticisms made upon the original utterances themselves, and upon this to build up a charge of misrepresentation.

Unfortunately, this is not the worst. Were the tables to be turned,

were the charge of misrepresentation to be made on the other side, how would Müller himself fare? In this point of view the result of any thorough examination will be found so astounding that the difficulty of belief will not lie in the nature of the proof itself, but in the reluctance which all high-minded men will feel in accepting the fact as proved. They will be disposed to think that here there must be some mistake; that a scholar of so great reputation and ability could never have been so short-sighted, to say nothing of other motives, as to do what is here asserted to be done. But the cases of positive misrepresentation are so numerous that the mind is embarrassed in selection by the very abundance: we shall content ourselves with one, not because it is the most flagrant, but because it requires no explanation of attendant circumstances. To make it perfectly clear, we give side by side the two following extracts, one representing what Whitney actually said, the other what Müller says he said:—

*Whitney in the "Contemporary Review,"*  
*April, 1875, p. 725.*

"I do not think Professor Müller the person best qualified to judge me fairly, because, in the first place, owing to his great fertility as a writer, and his position as accepted guide and philosopher, beyond any other living man of the English-speaking people, I have felt called upon to controvert his views oftener than those of any other authority; and yet more, in the second place, because he does not appear to have qualified himself by carefully examining what I have written."

*Müller in "Chips from a German Workshop," Vol. IV. p. 518 (535).*

"I do not consider Professor Müller capable of judging me justly," he says. And why? "Because I have felt moved on account of his extraordinary popularity and the exceptional importance attached to his utterances, to criticise him more frequently than anybody else."

The most striking circumstance about this is that Müller not only perverts the plain meaning of the language he pretends to quote, but actually makes his own perversion the subject of an elaborate reply. He imputes to Whitney the expression of a denial of the competency of his opponent to criticise him, because the latter has been previously criticised by Whitney himself; a meaning which perhaps may be given to the words as they appear in "In Self-Defence," but certainly could never be got out of the article in the "Contemporary Review." The Oxford professor seems, indeed, to be profoundly impressed with the discovery he has made. He tells us that he has watched many controversies, has observed many stratagems, but has never seen any-

thing to equal this, — an opinion in which all who examine this discussion will be pretty certain to coincide, though not perhaps in the way he puts it. “Is not this the height of forensic ingenuity?” he says. “Because A has criticised B, therefore B cannot criticise A justly.” To furnish an appearance of plausibility to this interpretation, it must be borne in mind that the extract found in the article, “In Self-Defence,” is given as an exact quotation of Whitney’s words, which it is not; and that, to mark it more distinctly as a quotation, it is put into a smaller kind of type. Looking upon it, indeed, simply as a mere summary of the sense, there is a broad distinction between speaking of a person as not being best qualified to judge one fairly, and of a person as not being capable of judging one justly. But letting these pass as matters of little moment, which they are far from being, what defence can be made for omitting the second and most essential part of the extract, and thereby giving to the mutilated sentence a meaning which its author never felt or expressed? Is this the conduct we are to expect from him who, though never belonging to a company of collaborators, is to be the faithful friend and fearless defender of every one who serves in the noble army for the conquest of truth? Is this method of argument sanctioned “by the still small voice of conscience within,” with the silent approval of which Müller tells us (p. 525 [543]) no one would for one moment compare the applause of the many? Certainly if these are the ways in which the views of an opponent are represented, he can well afford to say that he is “not one of those who believe that truth is much advanced by public controversy.”

We are far from wishing to charge that misrepresentations like that we have just discussed — and it is but one of many — are intentionally made: we prefer to look upon them as springing from a carelessness which here as well as elsewhere not unfrequently degenerates into actual slovenliness. But in the light of such facts, it would certainly have been well for Müller to give a little more heed to one opinion of Professor Whitney’s, for which he has hardly language contemptuous enough to express his scorn. Again and again he returns to it in the course of his defence. It seems that the latter labors under the impression that if the former undertakes to controvert his views, there is a sort of obligation resting upon him to make himself well enough acquainted with the writings under discussion to know what the views controverted really are. To any such requirement as this Müller takes emphatic exception. He apparently feels that the American author is appealing to a mere vulgar prejudice that the man who criticises a book ought to be expected to read it. In

that sphere of controversy, which in these articles Müller seems to have made peculiarly his own, notions such as this have been long exploded. There it is that the imagination of the poet comes into play, and not the accuracy of the scholar. At the same time, it must be admitted, that this method, though usually working well, has occasionally its disadvantages. From it arose, among others, the blunder, now become somewhat notorious, which led Müller to assert that Whitney had derived *light*, *alight*, and *delight* from a common source, when the point actually made was that they were one of many illustrations of the fact that it gives men no trouble to effect a separation in words which from their resembling one another closely in form would seem according to the usual analogies of language to stand together in a near relation of meaning. It is true that since the publication of his book, the Oxford professor has admitted his mistake; and the letter in which he makes the acknowledgment of it shows clearly that it was not, as it seemed to some, an intentional falsification, nor a misapprehension arising from careless examination. But what are we to think of the mental habits of the man who can make a mistake of this character; who not only makes it, but lays so much stress upon it that he puts forward his own careless misapprehension as a reason for not reading any further; and who returns to it again at the end of his defence, and inserts it as one of the twenty points of simple matters of fact which a jury of scholars is to be called upon to decide? But what erroneous impressions such reckless perversions of meaning, whether intentionally or blunderingly made, must necessarily convey to the mind of the ordinary reader, can easily be inferred when even so acute and fair-minded a scholar as Professor De Gubernatis accepted at first this statement on Müller's authority, though as soon as his attention was called to the original he at once confessed that he had been led into error.

A large share of Professor Müller's article "In Self-Defence" is taken up with a selection of quotations, or quasi-quotations, from Professor Whitney's writings, to sustain against the latter the charge of being grossly personal. These are given under the heading of *Epitheta Ornantia*; and even in the fragmentary form in which they are found there, it is evident that they were used, not to characterize individuals, but the opinions expressed by them. But necessarily the element of fairness and truth is left out of a controversy, when words and phrases are thus violently wrenched from the modifying context and put forward nakedly by themselves. The reader who, in this particular case, wishes to compare Whitney's words with the travesty that Müller gives of them, can find a simple illustration in

the former's remarks upon Oppert, as they appear in the first series of *Oriental and Linguistic Studies* (p. 237), and as they appear in the volume we are reviewing (p. 515 [533]); but this is only one of numerous instances. By the method of argument used in these cases, there would be little difficulty in proving the Bible not a fit book to be read aloud in a respectable family. And, for that matter, in all controversial discussions something must be allowed for the temperament of the individual. Some men are by nature caustic in criticism; as regards the effect produced upon the public, it is a hindrance and not a help. Müller himself is of a genial temperament; on principle he has always avoided controversy. In this work, for instance, with that calmness and self-restraint which characterizes the man who is unwilling to say anything personal or offensive, he deplors the inability of Professor Whitney to comprehend "what is real criticism and what is mere banter, personal abuse, and rudeness" (p. 504 [522]); and in the spirit of such "real criticism" as distinguished from "personal abuse," further designates him as "a gentleman who had acquired considerable notoriety, not indeed by any special and original researches in Comparative Philology, but by his repeated attempts at vilifying the works of other scholars." To the ordinary man a person thus generally described would seem sufficiently discreditable of himself, without needing a hundred pages and more to be devoted to his annihilation; especially by him who takes the pains to assure us over and over again that he has been careful not to read, until very lately, the writings in which this vilification is found. "But what could I do?" says Müller, almost plaintively. He complains that he has been severely assailed. But inasmuch as he has in consequence modified many of his previous statements, inasmuch as he himself confesses that, in some cases, he had gone too far in the expression of his opinions, he must admit that there was some ground for attack; and he can hardly venture to claim that it has been directed against him as a man and not against his views as a scholar. It may perhaps strike some, indeed, that Müller's own ideas as to what constitutes "real criticism" are somewhat peculiar. According to his theory, to call a man's arguments futile and absurd, is the height of personality; but it is perfectly proper to stigmatize a band of scholars as forming together by a childish arrangement an International Sanskrit Insurance Company, singing each other's praises in the literary journals of Russia, Germany, and America, and speaking slightly of all who have not joined them. This, we suppose, is the impersonal and high-polite way of talking of the foremost scholars in one's own

department, by him who has clear ideas of what is real criticism and what is personal abuse and rudeness; for this is the way in which Müller, in the columns of the "Saturday Review," as far back as March, 1864, spoke of the editors of the St. Petersburg lexicon and of its various contributors. As, however, this article originally appeared anonymously, he probably looks upon it as having nothing to do with "public" controversy.

Severity of criticism is, indeed, a matter of taste. It is frequently determined by circumstances of which the public knows nothing; and, where technical questions are involved, of which the public is incompetent to form an opinion. But in all controversy there is a question above that of taste. It is the question of morals; of the right which every disputant can claim that he shall not have words put into his mouth which he has never said; that he shall not have single words and phrases wrenched from their proper place so as to give the passage an entirely different meaning from what it was intended to convey. Carelessness may palliate Müller's conduct in this particular; it cannot wholly excuse it. And even granting its full weight to the plea of carelessness, what right had he to make the insinuation that Mr. Darwin, Jr., was prevailed upon to stand sponsor to Whitney's article? What right to repeat the charge, in another place, in words to the effect that the latter got possession of the pen of the son, fondly trusting that it would carry with it the weight of the father? As it turns out, the American professor knew nothing of Mr. Darwin's article till it appeared in the "Contemporary Review." Insinuations like this, equally untrue and unfair, are certain of returning to plague the inventor; for if they have no other effect, they inevitably lead to the suspicion in the mind of every reader who knows the actual facts, that the charge originates in a lively consciousness, drawn from personal experience, of the possibility of proceedings of this kind. Again, can the defence of even the most slovenly carelessness be made for the account given by Müller on page 527 (544) of his meeting with Professor Whitney, in which facts are perverted and dates disregarded to sustain a statement that he "could afford to forget" something which had certainly never happened then if it ever happened at all? Well may Oxford endow for him a chair of original research; for with an imagination like this, there seems to be no limit to the discoveries that can be made.

We have left ourselves no space to speak in detail of the charge of gross blunders made by the American scholar while correcting the blunders of others; and we can only remark that here also is the



usual unfortunate discrepancy between what Whitney actually writes and what Müller says he writes. Those of our readers who justly feel that assertions of this kind should never be taken upon trust, can easily compare the language attributed and the language really used, by looking up the references we give in three cases : first, on a point of Sanscrit grammar, page 490 (508), and "Oriental and Linguistic Studies," I. 138 ; secondly, on the derivative nature of the Phœnician alphabet, page 430 (446), and "Language and the Study of Language," pages 295 and 462 ; and, thirdly, on the writings of Bur-nouf, page 515 (533), and "Oriental and Linguistic Studies," I. 135 and 176-179. We specify these because they are all included in that curious collection of petty and important questions as to simple matters of fact which Müller in this work professed a great anxiety to submit to a jury of scholars, — a list which ends with almost feminine spitefulness with the final point to be adjudicated, whether Professor Whitney has occasionally been forgetful. It ought, perhaps, to be added here, that Müller sometimes makes the argument for his side seem more plausible by going to the German translations of the American scholar's words, and turning them back into English of his own ; a proceeding which shows of itself the liveliest anxiety to get at the precise meaning of the author criticised.

It is with no feeling of pleasure that we have pointed out these glaring misstatements. The fall of a high reputation is never a matter to contemplate with satisfaction, nor are charges tending to produce it to be uttered lightly. We most certainly hope that Professor Müller will be able to furnish explanations which will save his honor as a man, even if in so doing he is obliged to sacrifice somewhat his reputation as an accurate scholar. And we can well believe that much can be accounted for by the habit of loose thinking and writing which has grown upon him as a result of the anomalous situation in which he has been placed. His position, indeed, has been one that would have been apt to turn a much stronger head. Early making England his home, he brought to the students of that country a realizing sense that there was something in language beside the writing of Greek and Latin verses. It was to them the revelation of a new religion. It was not that others had not before entertained and expressed the same ideas. He was the first to make them attractive and operative, — the first who united knowledge of the subject with the power of popular exposition, — who possessed the faculty of clothing the driest details with the freshness and interest of living reality. The apostle of a new faith, he became identified in that country with the faith itself ; an attack upon him was looked upon as an attack upon it.

It would certainly have been strange, if the adulation of which he has been made the object, the indisposition to doubt, or the inability to contradict his most questionable utterances had not made him self-confident and careless. Secure in the ignorant and unsuspecting devotion of the English public, he felt himself for a long time under no necessity of taking any apparent notice of the severe sifting which his views were receiving in other quarters, though the bitterness of his late expressions shows how deeply the hostile criticism must have rankled. In Germany, where the respect paid to the linguistic views advanced by him as a scholar had long been sinking, he was still esteemed, and perhaps feared, as a man of letters ; and the confidence felt in him in the latter capacity more than counterbalanced, until lately, the failing faith entertained for him in the former. But the voice of Germany, however potent, was practically shut out from the great mass in England by the difference of language ; and it was only when a writer in his own tongue, and at last in the journals of his adopted land, gave utterance to the views which were widely held elsewhere, that he recognized the necessity of laying aside the pretence of indifference which could no longer be successfully kept up. The violence with which he now expresses himself, the recklessness with which he makes unsupported assertions, furnish convincing proof that he must have long bitterly felt in secret that his reputation in many respects was built upon insecure foundations ; that the opinion of the men in his own department best competent to judge was sure in the end to prevail over the ignorant devotion of the most servile English journal ; that felicity of expression could not forever hide crudeness of thought or give lasting life to ill-digested theories. But whatever be his failings, he has exercised a powerful influence both in England and in this country in favor of higher studies ; and he owes it to the men who have been stimulated by his words, who have long been wont to look upon him as one of their foremost leaders, to clear himself, if possible, from the damaging suspicions which the peculiar character of the articles we have reviewed is certain to beget. The opportunity for that has already been once afforded ; but while he availed himself of it to retract an interpretation whose falsity was apparent on its face, when once the context was seen, he failed to take the slightest notice of the far more serious charges demanding explanation which were brought to his attention at the same time and in the same place. It is a matter he cannot afford to neglect ; nor is it to the student only, in his own department, that a defence is due. It will be no jury of three that will pronounce upon his conduct, but the jury of honorable men throughout Europe and America,

who may neither know nor care much about Sanscrit, but who do feel that the safety of truth lies not in repeating sounding phrases about it, but in honestly living up to it, even when dealing with one's opponents or enemies; who will forgive, even if they regret, warmth of expression, but will never condone intentional misrepresentation. To the arbitrament of that jury he must submit himself, whether he will or no; by its decision must he stand or fall, whether he choose to recognize the tribunal or not; and the sentence it pronounces upon his reputation will be carried out, however much friends may deplore it, or against it partisans protest.

---

10. — *Life, Letters, and Journals of George Ticknor.* 2 vols. Boston: James R. Osgood and Company. 1876.

THE memoir of Mr. Ticknor is an agreeable and well-written book, rather large, perhaps, for the relative importance of its subject. Mr. Ticknor's public services were rendered as Professor of Belles-Lettres at Harvard University from 1819 to 1835, as the author of a History of Spanish Literature, and as largely influential in founding and regulating the Public Library in Boston. He was a good and enlightened teacher of belles-lettres, acquainted with European universities as well as with European languages, and quite in advance of the views prevailing around him. His History of Spanish Literature is the work of one who loved his subject, and who brought the results of its long-continued and thorough study to put together a work which will not require to be done over again for some generations. As one of the Trustees of the Public Library, and especially as the confidential and trusted adviser of its founder, he showed the same knowledge and genuine love of books, and the same desire to make them acceptable to all who could use them worthily, that he showed on a different scale in the formation and use of his own library.

Mr. Ticknor's social life and character, however, far more than his public work, form the interest of these two volumes which have been widely found interesting. His qualities, his circumstances, and his opportunities were in some things unusual, in many things fortunate. He had the excellent gift of very decided tastes, and the good fortune of entire freedom. From the time when, a very young man, he took the then unusual step of going to study at Göttingen, to the last day of his life, he was singularly unhindered by circumstances. His two marked characteristics were a love of literature and a love of society, and they had full play for sixty years.